

Congress, is unable to meet its end of a good-faith agreement with State leaders fully expecting to be reimbursed and not having to “take it out of hide,” which is what the National Guard is being asked to do now.

To put it simply, guardsmen—and I hear from them every single day—are in absolute disbelief that after all they have done this last year, answering our Nation’s call, this is how they are being treated.

Madam Speaker, today is July 21. We have 11 days. We must take immediate action. I urge all of us in Congress to swiftly come to an agreement on an appropriations emergency bill that includes full reimbursement of \$521 million for our National Guard by August 1. That is the least we can do for our citizen soldiers and their families who are always ready and always there.

CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF CHARLES “CHUCK” POETTCKER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. BOST) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the life of Charles “Chuck” Poettcker who passed away suddenly on Saturday.

I had the honor of calling Chuck a friend. And I know that he is leaving a legacy that has impacted so many.

A U.S. Army veteran, Chuck served in the 101st Airborne Division stationed at Camp Evans in South Vietnam. At just 20 years old, he and his unit were given orders for a rescue mission in Laos. They were tasked with rescuing two door gunners and recovering the bodies of a downed helicopter pilot and co-pilot. Because of his heroic actions during the mission and journey back to safety, Chuck was awarded the U.S. Army Bronze Star.

A man of faith, Chuck prayed that if he made it out alive, he would dedicate his life to building something of value for others. He did just that.

He returned home and began a career as an apprentice carpenter, taking night classes in construction management at what is now the Southwestern Illinois College. He went on and founded Poettcker Construction, leading the company for 41 years. Today, the company employs over 200 families across 26 States.

He was also committed to his community and giving back to the Metro East area there in southern Illinois through numerous charities.

Madam Speaker, my prayers go out to Chuck’s wife, Linda, and his family and many friends during this difficult time.

SUPPORTING APPRENTICESHIPS FOR VETERANS

Mr. BOST. Madam Speaker, I also rise today to talk about the fact that when I ran Bost Trucking company for 10 years, many of our hardest workers and most trusted employees shared something in common. They were veterans.

The military teaches servicemembers invaluable skills, leadership, team-

work, and dedication to compete and complete the missions that they are assigned. But many veterans are facing challenges in finding work after COVID-19 shutdowns. That is why I have introduced the Veterans’ Agricultural Apprenticeship Act.

This bipartisan bill will help connect out-of-work veterans with farmers and ranchers who are in need of on-the-farm labor. It will help farmers and ranchers expand their operations while also offering the veterans new skills and career paths once they return home.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleague from Florida (Mr. LAWSON) and our bipartisan group of 15 additional cosponsors for supporting this critically important bill. I hope that more of our colleagues will join us in helping advance a win-win solution to an ever-growing problem.

INVESTING IN RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oklahoma (Mr. LUCAS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. LUCAS. Madam Speaker, I stand today before this deliberative body to talk about the importance of rural infrastructure; more specifically, watershed and flood control infrastructure.

Our Nation’s watershed dams play a critical yet silent role in many of our daily lives. Across the Nation, watershed projects provide an estimated annual benefit of \$2.2 billion in reduced flood and erosion damage and improving wildlife, habitat, recreation, and water supply for more than 47 million people.

In my home State of Oklahoma alone, there are more than 2,000 watershed dam projects that help Oklahomans meet a myriad of public needs: public safety, water supply, soil health, and fish and wildlife management, just to name a few.

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In fact, the country’s first upstream flood control dam, Cloud Creek Site No. 1, was built right in the backyard of my district in Washita County. Built in 1948, following the passage of the Flood Control Act of 1944, the dam allowed for the preservation of farmland, wildlife, and several municipal services.

Fast forward to today, and many of our country’s 12,000 watershed dams have exceeded their designed lifespan. Like so much of the public infrastructure investments across this country, our watershed dams are aging and need to be upgraded to remain safe and continue to provide benefits for generations to come.

Seeing the need to rehabilitate many of our dams, in 2000 I authored the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Amendments which have provided important investments to help countless dams in need of repair.

After more than two decades of funding through the Small Watershed Re-

habilitation Amendments, more than \$900 million has been appropriated for rehabilitating aging dams. In the 2018 farm bill alone, we provided \$50 million per year in mandatory funding for watershed rehabilitation and management.

I am proud to mark the 20th anniversary of the Small Watershed Rehabilitation Amendments being signed into law this past year, but we must not delay the continued need to rehabilitate and repair other aging dams and water infrastructure. These silent sentinels are vital to public safety, economic prosperity, community viability and must not be allowed to fail.

We learned a lot of lessons 20 years ago in passing the dam rehabilitation bill. Now we must continue this mission as we debate and consider infrastructure legislation.

Madam Speaker, to aid in these efforts, I include in the RECORD the brought forth report at [damsafety.org \smallwatershed](https://damsafety.org/smallwatershed).

In closing, as Congress negotiates on how best to invest in our Nation’s infrastructure, we must continue to invest in the rehabilitation of these aging public works.

It is time to put the lessons of past appropriate investment to good use and build the capacity of a new generation to protect critical infrastructures for decades to come.

RECOGNIZING TIMOTHY J. BURKE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BACON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BACON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the hard work and success of Timothy J. Burke, who retired from the Omaha Public Power District on July 2 after serving the company for 24 years. He began his career with OPPD in 1997 as vice president and in 2015 took over as the company’s 12th President and CEO.

During his time with OPPD, Tim faced some tough challenges, but with his tenacity and great leadership skills, he overcame them all.

Burke’s tenure as CEO will be remembered as one of transition. He made several decisions early on that set the future for OPPD. When he became the CEO, OPPD initiated utility-wide lean financial work to make the utility financially efficient and strong. Burke also made what he called the most difficult decision he ever made or had been involved with, recommending the closure of Fort Calhoun Nuclear Generating Station due to financial concerns and economies of scale at the country’s smallest nuclear plant.

In addition, under Burke, the company continued to achieve financial stability and 5 straight years of no general rate increase—which is amazing—which is now in its fifth year of no rate increases. Further, Burke’s time at OPPD included a transition to more renewable energy and the commitment to be a net zero-carbon emitter by 2050.